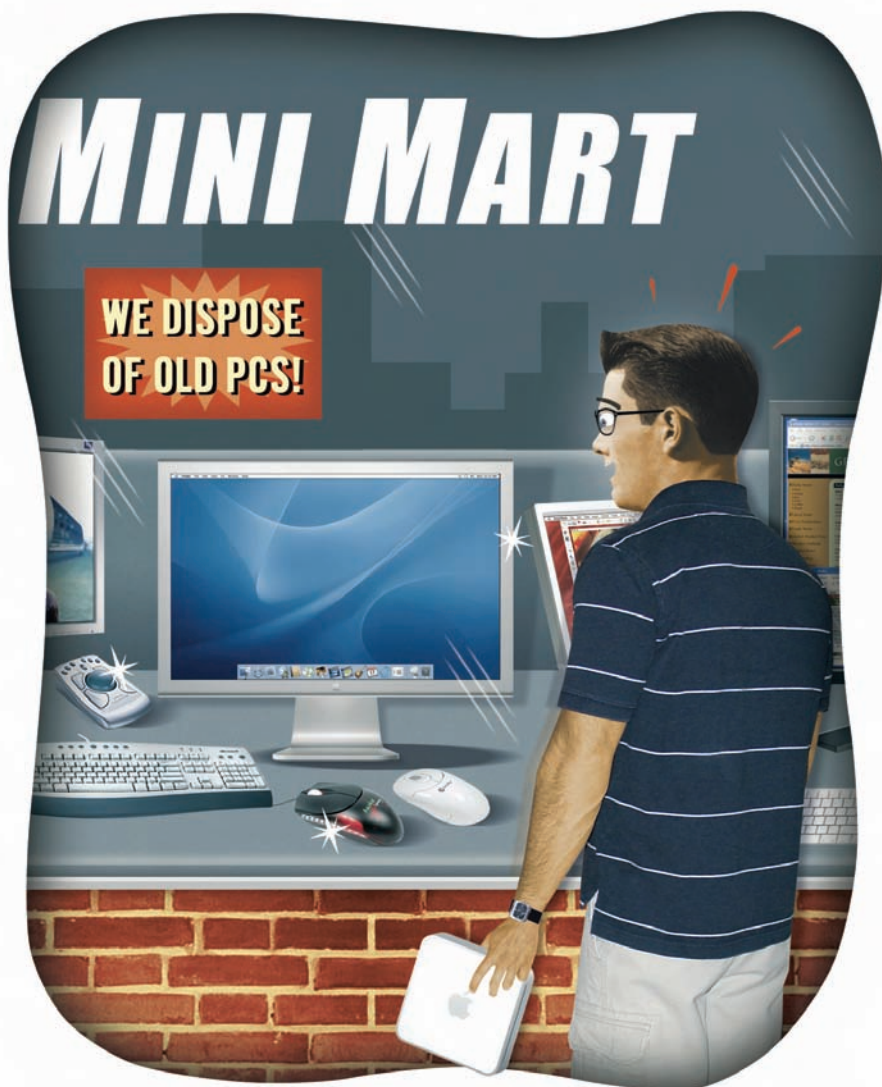


MAC MINI

BUYERS' GUIDE



The Mac mini may be small, but it's got *big* potential. It's a great tool for managing your digital photos and music. It's a powerful, low-cost replacement for that aging, spyware-infested PC in the corner. And it's an easy way to add a second Mac to your household.

But the mini's \$499 price doesn't include a monitor, a keyboard, a mouse, or any of the great add-on utilities that make the Mac even easier to use. You'll need to supply those yourself.

We'll help you stock up on essentials, as well as those little extras that will transform your new Mac from a basic workstation into a model of efficiency—all without blowing your budget. Also, if you're more comfortable with Windows than with Mac OS X, we'll show you how to get up and running on the Mac without missing a beat.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN UELAND



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Outfit Your Mac Mini



Essential Gear for Every Budget **By Mathew Honan and Kelly Lunsford**

If you're using your new Mac mini to replace that aging dinosaur on your desk, you probably already have a monitor, a keyboard, and a mouse. But if you're starting from scratch, you'll need to pick up these items on your own. Thankfully, there's no shortage of options. Whether you're sticking to a strict budget or ready to splurge (hey, just think of all the money you saved on your Mac mini), your perfect setup is out there waiting for you.

One Setup, Two Computers

If you're switching from a PC, you may not be ready to retire your old workhorse. This could mean that you end up with two keyboards, two mice, and two monitors. A more sensible solution is to get a KVM (keyboard-video-mouse) switch, a device into which you plug one keyboard, one mouse, one monitor, and two computers—for example, your old PC and your new Mac mini. To switch between the two machines, you simply press a button. The Belkin OmniView SOHO Series 2-Port USB KVM Switch with Audio (\$140 without cables; www.belkin.com) will let you share a DVI monitor, USB peripherals, and even your speakers.—DAVID FANNING



Monitors Except for your Mac mini, a new monitor will probably be your priciest piece of hardware. Of course, that's not to say you can't find great deals. But before you run out and buy the cheapest monitor you can find, take a moment to consider how much time you'll spend staring at its screen. Your eyes will benefit from an investment in a good monitor.

CRTs

Once the standard for monitors, CRT (cathode-ray tube) displays are largely going the way of the floppy disk as shoppers increasingly opt for slimmer, more attractive LCDs. But if you're looking for a bargain, these desktop behemoths remain an attractive option.

You can pick up a new CRT online for as little as \$50; for a good CRT that you won't mind staring at, expect to pay around \$150. On an even tighter budget? Old CRT displays are gathering dust on thrift-store shelves and atop barstools at garage sales across the country. Many corporations are literally giving them away rather than attempting to dispose of them.

There are other advantages, too. Unlike with some LCDs, the image on a CRT looks good from any angle—so they're good choices in settings where a monitor will be viewed by numerous people, such as in a classroom or a boardroom. And although LCDs have made enormous advances in recent years, some design pros still prefer CRTs for accurate color.



ViewSonic E70f+SB (\$106)

This 17-inch flat CRT produces sharp images at a great price. And its silver and black case is a stylish alternative to an all-white or all-black case (www.viewsonic.com).

However, a CRT's low price comes at a fairly hefty environmental cost. CRTs consume more power than LCDs (look for one with the Energy Star label to find an energy-efficient model) and give off considerably more heat—not to mention electromagnetic radiation and small doses of X rays. To keep those X rays in check, CRTs are filled with lead. Unless you send your monitor to a reputable recycler, that lead is going to end up in a landfill or, worse, poisoning the groundwater in a third-world scrap yard. The EPA sponsors a national recycling program, and odds are there's a recycler in your area. You can search by your zip code at www.earth911.org.

If you're looking to purchase a CRT, here are a few things to consider:

Going Flat Don't be confused by the name; a flat CRT simply has a flat screen instead of a curved one. A flat CRT takes up just as much desktop real estate as a traditional model. However, these models offer significantly better image quality and fewer glare issues.

Screen Size The viewable screen on a CRT is typically about an inch to an inch and a half less than the stated screen size. So while you can score a 15-inch CRT for less than an iPod shuffle, you may wish you hadn't when you try to edit a digital image on its screen.

Basic Specifications In order to prevent eye strain, you should make sure that any CRT you select meets a few basic requirements: its dot pitch, which affects the screen's sharpness, should be less than 0.28mm; it should have a minimum resolution of at least 1024 by 768; and it should refresh the screen at 75Hz or higher at its optimum resolution.

LCDs

If you're willing to spend a little more money, you can reclaim—and beautify—your desk space by choosing a flat-panel LCD.

In recent years, LCDs' prices have come down as their quality has gone up, so they're now in reach of even budget shoppers. In addition to their small size, LCDs have a smaller ecological footprint, using half as much power and lasting as much as twice as long as a CRT display. And because it doesn't mask the screen's edges, an LCD actually lets you view more of the screen than a CRT does.

The picture on an LCD is much brighter; in a well-lit room with lots of windows, LCD screens are much easier to view than CRTs. LCDs typically offer higher native resolutions than CRTs, so text appears crisp and well defined even at small font sizes. And since the screen doesn't refresh, there's no flicker.

Here are a few things to consider when you're buying an LCD.

Connection Type When you're shopping for an inexpensive LCD, be sure to find out what type of connection it uses. Many low-end models offer only an analog VGA connection. Although you can connect these monitors to your Mac mini via an included adapter, your image quality will suffer.

Viewing Angle Unlike a CRT, some LCD screens have limited viewing angles. As you move toward either side, the screen may grow darker and colors may distort. Since manufacturers' claims are often overly positive, you should check this out in a store before making a purchase.

Additional Features Monitors that offer additional features such as adjustable stands and built-in USB ports are worth special consideration. An adjustable stand will help you keep your monitor at eye level and reduce neck strain. And, really, you can never have too many USB ports. But watch out for monitors that offer built-in speakers. These tend to be low quality. You're better off investing in a nice pair of external speakers.

Tip

Monitors come with one or two types of connections: VGA, which uses an analog signal, and DVI, which uses a digital signal. Almost all CRT monitors use VGA connections. LCDs, on the other hand, tend to come with both types.

The Mac mini offers native support for DVI connections. But you can connect a VGA monitor via an included cable. (Some Mac users have experienced problems with VGA monitors, such as reduced brightness. For details, go to macworld.com/0434.) Keep in mind though that converting a signal from analog to digital reduces image quality. A monitor with a native digital connection will give you the best picture quality.

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Envision EFT920 (\$143)

For a little more money, you can get additional screen space with Envision's flat-screen 19-inch CRT (www.envisiondisplay.com).



ViewSonic VG510s (\$225)

A 15-inch LCD's screen is only slightly smaller than a 17-inch CRT's. And unlike most LCDs of this size, this one offers a DVI connection (www.viewsonic.com).



Sharp LL-172GB (\$354)

This 17-inch LCD produces sharp text and has height controls that lock into place, a headphone jack, and an efficient design (www.sharpusa.com).

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#189051	1.42GHz G4	256MB	YES	YES	80GB	Combo	2/1	56K V.92
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


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Keyboards

Unlike mice, which are relatively platform neutral, keyboards come in either a Mac or a Windows configuration. Most Mac users prefer a Mac-oriented keyboard. However, if you find a Windows-centric USB keyboard that you like, it is possible to adapt it for your Mac (see "Where's My  Key?").

Tip

Although USB is standard for Mac accessories, many PC input devices use PS/2 connectors. To use these devices with your Mac mini, you'll need an adapter such as the Iogear GUC100KM (\$50; www.iogear.com). This adapter connects a PS/2 keyboard and mouse to a single USB port on your Mac mini or a USB hub.



Multimedia Center

Microsoft Digital Media Keyboard Pro (\$30)

This keyboard from Microsoft has extra buttons for quick access to the programs and features that you use most often. A convenient zoom slider even lets you zoom in on and out from documents and pictures without reaching for the mouse. The keyboard comes with a Windows layout, but its software lets you reassign the keys so it works like a Mac keyboard (www.microsoft.com).



Comfort Design

Adesso Tru-Form Keyboard (\$80)

Some people find straight keyboards uncomfortable because they force hands into an awkward position close to the body. A good alternative is a wave, or split, keyboard, such as the Tru-Form Keyboard, from Adesso (www.adesso.com). On these keyboards, the alphanumeric keys are angled toward each other; this setup more closely resembles the way your wrists naturally point. Some keyboards take the concept even farther. The \$129 GoldTouch Keyboard USB (www.sforh.com), for example, splits the board into separate pieces and then tilts them upward so you can type in a more natural, vertical position.





Old-School Favorite Reborn

Matias Tactile Pro (\$100)

Admittedly, \$100 is a lot for a keyboard, but the Tactile Pro isn't your average model. It uses the same mechanical key switches as the classic Apple Pro Keyboard from the late 1980s and early 1990s, for greater control and typing speeds. It also lists special characters right on the keys. *Macworld's* editors liked it so much that they gave it an Editors' Choice Award (www.matias.ca).



Where's My Key?

You can use any USB keyboard with the Mac mini, but not all of them will be Mac-friendly. Many keyboards—particularly inexpensive ones—come with a Windows-specific configuration: the option and  keys are switched, and the  key is replaced by a Windows key. Some keyboards—including some from Microsoft—come with software for reprogramming keys. If yours doesn't, download the free DoubleCommand, from Michael Baltaks (doublecommand.sourceforge.net). This kernel extension lets you remap the keys on any Windows keyboard.



Matched Pair

Kensington Wireless Optical Desktop for Mac (\$80)

This bundled deal includes a wireless RF keyboard and mouse for a clutter-free setup. The keyboard has buttons for one-touch access to media controls and comes with a Mac configuration. The set includes a charger so you can always have a set of backup batteries ready to go when the other pair runs out of juice—a common problem with RF devices (www.kensington.com). (For more wireless options, see "Choosing a Wireless Setup.")

Mice and Trackballs

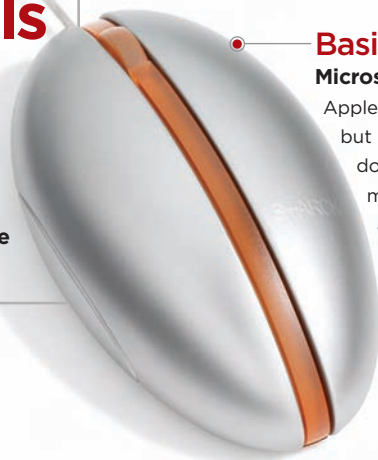
The Mac mini will work with any USB mouse—although you may need additional software to take advantage of some features. If your favorite mouse doesn't offer OS X drivers, you may still be able to use it with the help of Alessandro Montalcini's \$20 USB Overdrive X (www.usboverdrive.com). Since hand sizes and working styles differ, you should take a mouse for a test drive before you buy it.



Steady Motion

Kensington Expert Mouse (\$100)

In addition to the four large buttons that can be programmed in six different ways, this trackball offers an interesting alternative to a scroll wheel: its *scroll ring* encircles the trackball and lets you use a circular motion to scroll, which some people find more comfortable. It uses optical sensors to follow the movement of the ball, which makes the tracking more accurate and means you'll never again have to clean lint out of the rollers. It also comes with a padded wrist guard (www.kensington.com).



Basic Beauty

Microsoft Optical Mouse by Starck (\$15)

Apple's one-button mouse may look sleek, but it certainly won't help you get anything done. Most people will benefit from a mouse with at least two buttons—for left and right clicking—and a scroll wheel. But there's no need to give up style. This chic mouse designed by Philippe Starck has these basics and a streamlined design that would make Steve Jobs proud (www.microsoft.com).

Comfort Fit

Evoluent VerticalMouse 2 (\$56)

If you spend a lot of time at a computer, you'll benefit from a mouse that minimizes strain on your wrists and elbows. For example, the five-button VerticalMouse 2 holds your hand in a more natural position—as though you were shaking hands (www.evolutent.com). Different people find different hand positions comfortable, so there's no single solution. (For additional ergonomic options, check out www.thehumansolution.com.)



Cordless Freedom

Logitech MX 1000 Laser Mouse (\$80)

Thanks to its laser tracking system, this wireless RF mouse is more precise than its optical siblings and can go where they sometimes can't—across glossy surfaces. It will also let you scroll sideways (a feature that you'll also find in many of Microsoft's mice). This can be useful when you're working with spreadsheets or navigating Web sites. The mouse includes a recharging cradle and even has a battery indicator right on the side so you won't be taken by surprise (www.logitech.com).

Choosing a Wireless Setup

What good is a slick-looking Mac if it's surrounded by a mess of cables? Wireless devices can really help you create an elegant desktop. There are two main types of wireless input devices: those that use the 27MHz radio frequency (RF) and those that use Bluetooth. RF systems are more common and cost less; Bluetooth setups offer better range and fewer interference issues (RF runs on the same band as cordless phones). If you don't have Bluetooth installed on your mini, you'll need a USB Bluetooth adapter. A downside to wireless systems is that they require batteries (RF devices go through batteries particularly quickly). Your mouse should at the very least have an on-screen battery-life indicator.

Apple-esque The Apple-inspired Bluetooth Mouse BT (\$70; www.macmice.com) has an extra button and a scroll wheel.



For Southpaws

Perfit Mouse Optical (\$110)

Life isn't fair to lefties—particularly when it comes to mice. A paltry few are configured with southpaws in mind. Some mice offer ambidextrous setup options that let you reprogram buttons. An even better option is the Perfit Mouse Optical, from

Contour Design—it comes not only in left- and right-handed configurations, but also in different sizes (www.contourdesign.com).



Smart Sidekicks

Being a savvy shopper isn't just about saving money. It's also about finding those choice gadgets that give you some bang for your buck. Whether you're using your mini as a home stereo or looking to upgrade what came in the box, here are some quick ways to get the most from your new Mac.



Sound System

Logitech Z-3i (\$80)

With iTunes 4.7, your Mac mini is primed to become your digital music station. But if you want to actually *enjoy* listening to your music, you'll need a good pair of speakers. Thanks to its brushed-aluminum and white details, the Z-3i will look right at home next to your Mac mini. And its subwoofer and two satellite speakers will let you rock out from across the room. A wired remote gives you easy access to volume controls and a headphone jack (macworld.com/0473).



Remote Control

Keyspan Express Remote (\$60)

Are you constantly walking over to your Mac to change songs? Take control of your media files from afar with Keyspan's Express Remote (www.keyspan.com). Its infrared base station connects to the USB port on your Mac mini or AirPort Express base station. The 17-button remote lets you control audio and video from as far as 40 feet away.

Multimedia Hub

Iogear USB 2.0 Hub & Card Reader (\$50)

The Mac mini comes with just two USB ports. Unless you want to spend all your time switching out USB devices, a hub is a wise investment. This Iogear hub (www.iogear.com) is a particularly smart choice: it not only offers six high-speed USB 2.0 connections, but also can read just about any media card you care to throw at it—including CompactFlash, Memory Stick, Secure Digital, SmartMedia, and MultiMedia cards.



Travel Companion

WaterField Mac Mini SleeveCase (\$39)

At just 2.9 pounds, your new Mac mini is ready to hit the road with you. In fact, if you have a monitor at work and one at home, the new Mac mini makes for an inexpensive portable computer. This protective carrying case from WaterField will keep it safe while it's in transit (www.sfbags.com).



MATHEW HONAN is a San Francisco-based freelance writer and photographer. His work has appeared in *Wired* and *Time* and on Salon.com. KELLY LUNSFORD is a *Macworld* senior editor.

Maximize Your Mac Mini

When you buy a Mac mini, Apple gives you the option of upgrading it with more memory, better drives, and wireless hardware. But don't feel constrained by Apple's options. There's plenty more you can do to make your mini the ultimate tiny computer.

To take your Mac mini apart, you'll need a putty knife and a screwdriver (for pictures of the internal components, go to macworld.com/0474). If you prefer, several companies will install the upgrades for you, including Other World Computing



(macworld.com/0476) and FastMac (macworld.com/0475).

Memory Upgrade You can save some serious cash by buying a memory upgrade online and installing it yourself (but when Apple says that the mini can hold only 1GB of RAM, it's not kidding).

The Optical Drive The Mac mini comes with a Combo drive (for CD burning and DVD playback) or a SuperDrive. But you can swap either of those out for a dual-layer DVD drive. I replaced mine with OWC's \$150 Pioneer DVR-K04

drive. To make the switch, remove the RAM and detach any wireless antennas; then remove the optical drive.

The Hard Drive Apple sells the Mac mini with a 40GB or an 80GB hard drive. But the mini uses the same hard drives that most laptops do. I replaced my mini's built-in hard drive with a \$220 Seagate Momentus 2.5-inch 100GB drive.

To access the mini's hard drive, remove the optical drive, disconnect the chassis it was connected to, and remove the fan.

Unscrew the stock hard drive and gently pull it away from the interconnect board. Then push the new drive snugly against the interconnect board and reassemble.—JASON SNELL

A Marriage Made in Heaven

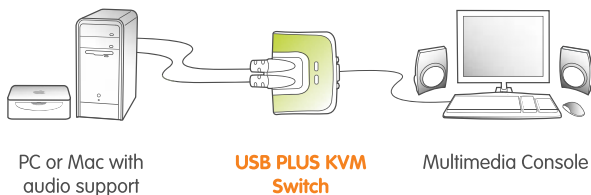
(or as we call it, California)



It's the perfect union of Mac Mini and PC. IOGEAR's tiny MiniView Micro KVM lets you easily connect your Mac mini (or any Mac) to a PC or another Mac, and share a single keyboard, monitor and mouse. You'll be up and running in a couple of minutes.

To switch back and forth between the two systems, simply tap a couple of keys on your keyboard. You can even plug your speakers into the MiniView Micro and enjoy your music from either system. And our little KVM is even white – just like your Mac mini.

Talk about wedded bliss. All that's missing is a handful of rice.



Don't yet have your Mac mini? Answer this simple question and be entered in a contest to **win** your very own Mac mini:

How long are the cables that are built into the MiniView Micro KVM (GCS632U)? (www.iogear.com/miniquiz)

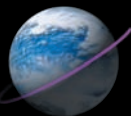


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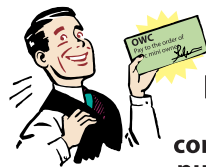
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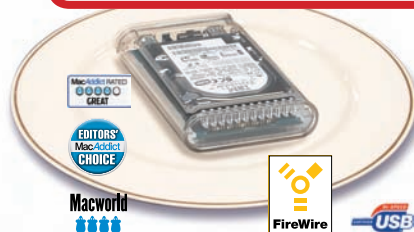


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Pump Up OS X



11 Inexpensive Utilities That Add Muscle to Your Mac **By Dan Frakes**

In a perfect world, your Mac would anticipate your every move, eliminate all tedious tasks, and heal itself in times of trouble. But although we don't yet live in a computing utopia, there's plenty you can do to speed up, simplify, and generally improve your favorite Mac programs right now—all for less than what you just spent on lunch.

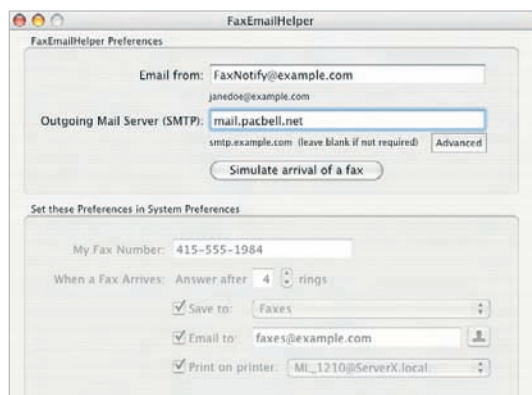
#1 BuddyPop 2.2

★★★★; Tynsoe.org, macworld.com/0122; \$6

BuddyPop provides a convenient way to access your OS X Address Book from within any application. Press a keyboard shortcut, and up pops a translucent window. Or type in a few letters of an Address Book contact's name and press return to get a floating, translucent window that lists the contact's details. You can click on an e-mail address to open a new message to that person, and you can click on a URL to open it in your

browser. BuddyPop also adds nice features to a Bluetooth-enabled cell phone: for example, it lets you call any contact by double-clicking on the person's mobile-phone number, and it displays a handy Caller-ID pop-up window for incoming calls.

Fax Fix FaxEmailHelper makes OS X's fax feature work the way it's supposed to.



#2 FaxEmailHelper 1.2

★★★★; Real World Technology Solutions, macworld.com/0340; free

OS X 10.3 can automatically forward faxes that your Mac receives to an e-mail address, so you can get your faxes no matter where you are. But this feature doesn't work for a lot of users. If this problem sounds familiar, FaxEmailHelper 1.2 may be the solution. It fixes OS X configuration issues that prevent many Macs from e-mailing received faxes. It also lets you specify a valid From e-mail address—required by many ISPs for delivery—and choose an outgoing (SMTP) mail server through which the e-mail should be sent (see "Fax Fix"). As a bonus, FaxEmailHelper lets you simulate the arrival of a fax—and the e-mailing of that fax, assuming you've set your Print & Fax preferences to forward them—so you can make sure that everything is working.

#3 ICeCoffEE 1.4

★★★★; Nicholas Riley, macworld.com/0341; free

ICeCoffEE is an OS X plug-in that lets you ⌘-click on a URL in most OS X-native applications (whether it's an e-mail message, a Read Me file, or even a dialog box) to automatically open the site in your preferred Web browser. ⌘-option-click, and you can choose a different browser or add the URL to a bookmark manager such as URL Manager Pro. In addition, ICeCoffEE adds a Services submenu to contextual menus or a Services item to the menu bar—so you don't have to dig through the Application menu to access services.

The All-in-One Powerhouse

If you buy only one utility for your Mac mini, make it You Software's **You Control** (★★★★; www.yousoftware.com). At \$50, it isn't cheap, but it packs a huge punch. You get 15 different utilities that work together to give you access to nearly every aspect of your Mac from one convenient menu. You get productivity features such as hierarchical file and folder menus, multiple clipboards, and quick access to address-book, calendar, RSS, and weather information. You choose which modules you want to use; you can even place them in a Hot Key menu that appears under your cursor for immediate access.

#4 iSeek

★★★★; Ambrosia Software, www.ambrosiasw.com; \$15

iSeek lets you start Web searches from within any application, without taking your fingers off the keyboard. Just press a user-defined keyboard combination, and the search field appears, ready for your input. You can choose from a bevy of possible search sites, including CNN.com, eBay, Google, NationalGeographic.com, Rotten Tomatoes, and VersionTracker. You can even pick the iTunes Music Store. Press return to see your search results pop up in your Web browser. If you frequently search a particular site, you can assign that site its own keyboard command via iSeek's preferences. If you've previously searched for a particular text string, iSeek will finish it for you the next time you start to type it—helpful when you're searching for the same thing on multiple sites.

#5 Mail Scripts 2.2

★★★★; Andreas Amann, macworld.com/0063; free

Mail Scripts is a set of AppleScripts that let you accomplish otherwise difficult or impractical tasks in Apple Mail. For example, you can use Mail Scripts to add all recipients of the current message to your address book, archive messages for backup or transfer, switch between SMTP servers (a boon for frequent travelers), create rules based on the current message, remove duplicate messages, schedule messages to be sent at particular times, and conduct complex searches of your address book.

#6 PDF Browser Plugin 1.2

★★★★; Manfred Schubert, www.schubert-it.com; free

PDF Browser Plugin turns your Web browser into a very capable PDF viewer—so you no longer have to bother with downloading PDFs and opening them in Acrobat. Instead, clicking on a link to a PDF file loads it in your browser and scales it to fit the window. Although you can save or print via your browser's File menu, using the plug-in menu to perform these tasks provides a few extra features. When you save a PDF file, PDF Browser Plugin puts the file's URL in its Finder comments field; this can be helpful if you need to return to the source. When you print, you can choose to scale the print job to fit your paper and choose to print odd or even pages (so you can create double-sided printouts).

#7 RCDefaultApp 1.2

★★★★; Rubicode, macworld.com/0073; free

Using RCDefaultApp, you can choose your preferred helper application for each of the main Internet protocols (Web, e-mail, newsgroups, and FTP), and select the helper for each URL protocol—from AFP (Apple Filing Protocol) to whois and everything in between (such as HTTP, HTTPS, ITMS, and SSH). Its MIME Types settings let you choose the default application for each kind of MIME content—such as the Windows Media videos

5 Ways to Be More Productive

Click, drag, copy, open, paste, click, close—each time you complete a repetitive sequence such as this, you're taking valuable seconds off your life. These OS X essentials will help you do more in fewer steps.

Carbon Copy Cloner 2.3

★★★★; Bombich Software, www.bombich.com; free

Whether you're making a backup or transferring your data to another Mac, Carbon Copy Cloner is a must-have utility. It puts a simple interface on a series of complex Unix-based scripts, so you can synchronize files, schedule backups, and create bootable disk images of your drive.—JASON SNELL

KeyCue 1.0

★★★★; ergonis software, www.macity.com; \$15

KeyCue takes the hassle out of learning keyboard shortcuts. Just hold down the \mathbb{A} key within any application, and up pops a window summarizing all the shortcuts currently available (see "Keyboard Crib Notes"). KeyCue also shows custom menu shortcuts you've defined via the Keyboard & Mouse preference pane. I've found KeyCue to be a great "cheat sheet" that actually helps me learn the shortcuts.—DAN FRAKES



Keyboard Crib Notes KeyCue lists all relevant keyboard commands, so you don't have to memorize them.

LaunchBar 4

★★★★; Objective Development, www.obdev.at; \$20

LaunchBar is so useful and powerful that it's difficult to fully explain. Press a keyboard shortcut, and LaunchBar appears; type the first few letters of an application, file, contact, or bookmark name—pretty much anything on your hard drive—and the program finds it; press return, and it opens the item. But LaunchBar actually *learns* your preferences as you use it; for example, pressing X-L has become my shortcut for Microsoft Excel. You can even drag and drop icons from LaunchBar, just as you would in the Finder or the Dock. I can't use a Mac without it.—DAN FRAKES

WindowShade X 3.5

★★★★; Unsanity, www.unsanity.com; \$10

WindowShade X brings OS 9's popular window-shade effect to OS X. Double-click on a window's title bar to collapse the window, and the window rolls up and out of the way, becomes transparent, or shrinks—you decide.—ROB GRIFFITHS

WinSwitch 1.2

★★★★; Wincent Colaiuta, wincent.com; free

One of my favorite features in OS X 10.3 is Fast User Switching, which lets you quickly switch between user accounts via a menu-bar menu. Unfortunately, the menu's title is the current user's full user name, which can take up a significant chunk of the menu bar. WinSwitch lets you choose how you want your Fast User Switching menu to appear, so you get all the benefits of Fast User Switching—without the wasted space.—DAN FRAKES

and PNG images you encounter on the Web. `RCDefaultApp` also lets you choose the application that should be used to open files that have particular file-name extensions (such as *.rtf*, *.doc*, and *.mpg*) and file types. Unlike other utilities, `RCDefaultApp` lets you disable types of files or protocols (such as URL schemes that pose secu-

3 Ways to Avoid Breakdowns

When you consider the time and heartbreak involved with fixing an ailing Mac, these three maintenance and troubleshooting utilities are true bargains—at less than \$10 each.

Macaroni 2.0

👑👑👑; Atomic Bird, www.atomicbird.com; \$9

Performed regularly, certain OS X maintenance tasks—Disk Utility's Repair Disk Permissions function and three Unix cleanup scripts—can help your Mac run more smoothly. Unfortunately, if you shut down your Mac (or put it to sleep) at night, the three Unix scripts never get a chance to run. Macaroni 2.0, however, ensures that OS X runs all three Unix maintenance tasks. It checks to see whether any of the scripts are overdue to run; if so, it runs them. Macaroni also prevents the tasks from taking up precious system resources while you work.

Peripheral Vision 1.6

★★★★; Granted Software, macworld.com/0343; \$7

Peripheral Vision 1.6 monitors FireWire, USB, Bluetooth, and network connections. This can help you troubleshoot potential hardware problems, such as a faulty USB hub. Peripheral Vision is also useful for avoiding problems with FireWire drives; for instance, it lets you know when it's safe to disconnect. In addition to monitoring peripherals, Peripheral Vision can launch an application or run an AppleScript or Unix script when it detects a particular peripheral. It also lets you rename your devices for easier monitoring. Peripheral Vision has become one of the first things I install when I get a new Mac.

Preferential Treatment 1.1

👍👍👍; Jon Nathan, macworld.com/0344; free

Finding and disposing of a damaged preference file is one of the best ways to fix (and even avoid) problems. Using Preferential Treatment, you can scan both user-level and system-level preference files for any XML errors (see “Bad Prefs, Begone”). You can use the Action menu to reveal the troublesome files in the Finder, immediately move them to the Trash, or open them in another application (a text editor or a .plist editor such as PrefEdit [www.bresink.de/osx/]). Preferential Treatment isn't foolproof, but it's a good place to start if you're experiencing problems that you suspect are due to a bad preference file.

Bad Prefs, Begone



ity risks), providing you with a one-stop solution for customizing default application preferences.

#8 Safari Extender

👤👤👤👤; Ricardo Batista, www.batista.org; \$10

Safari Extender augments Safari's contextual menus with new submenus that provide a slew of additional features. For example, in tabbed-browsing mode, you can rearrange tab order and save sets of tabs. Extender also lets you temporarily disable images to speed up page loading. And it delivers other frequently requested features, such as the ability to include the URL, time, and date when you print a Web page. Safari Extender also has useful e-mail commands that let you send someone selected text, the current URL, or all the URLs currently open in tabs.

#9 Synergy 1.6

👤👤👤^{1/2}; Wincent Colaiuta, synergy.wincent.org; €5

(about \$6 at press time)

Of the many iTunes controllers and information displays out there, none are as good as Synergy, which integrates the best features of other utilities and adds a few of its own. Synergy places playback controls in the menu bar (including a menu listing recent tracks and playlists); provides systemwide hot keys for playback and volume control; and adds a snazzy, translucent informational display that fades in and out at the start of each track (or at your command). It will even grab album art from the Internet if it's not already in your library.

#10 WordService 2.5

🔗; Devon Technologies, macworld.com/0342; free

If you frequently have to manipulate text, this plug-in is a must-have. WordService provides more than 30 functions, via the Services menu, for working with text. After selecting text in a services-aware application, such as Microsoft Word, you can perform a number of formatting and conversion actions on the text—sorting lines, changing line endings, converting capitalization, creating smart quotes, and more. WordService can also insert the current date and time into a text field or document.

#11 TinkerTool

👤👤👤👤; Marcel Bresink; www.bresink.com/osx/; free

Mac OS X has scores of hidden settings that you might want to change but that don't have convenient buttons in System Preferences. TinkerTool provides a way to access many of these secret settings via a simple interface. You can alter settings for the Finder and the Dock, Exposé, system fonts, menu shortcuts, and much more. And unlike many similar utilities, TinkerTool doesn't include system-level tweaks that can be dangerous if used improperly.

Senior Writer DAN FRAKES (www.danfrakes.com) writes *Macworld's* monthly *Mac Gems* column. He is also *Playlistmag.com's* reviews editor.

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Everything You Need to Leave Windows Behind and Never Look Back **By David Pogue**



Maybe you've come to the Mac because you love its look. Maybe you're just tired of the constant onslaught of viruses, spyware, and other malevolent forces on your Windows computer. Or maybe the \$499 Mac mini was just the excuse you've been looking for to see what all the fuss is about.

Although OS X is more like Windows than any previous Mac OS version, it's still uncharted territory to former Windows users. Unless you plan to just throw out your Windows box and start fresh, you'll need to have a strategy for the move. This guide will help. I'll show you how to transfer your stuff from the PC to the Mac, replace the software you left behind, and find your way around OS X 10.3 (Panther).

Tip

If you're having trouble moving important data from a Windows program to your Mac, look for shareware utilities that can convert the data into a more compatible format. For example, Little Machines' \$10 Outlook-2Mac program (www.littlemachines.com) will help you move your Microsoft Outlook data to Mac-compatible e-mail, calendar, and address-book programs. —KELLY LUNSFORD

Taking Stock of What You Need

For most people switching to the Mac, the first question is "What about all my old files?"

First, the good news: These days, there are very few things you can do on a Windows machine that you can't also do on a Mac. In fact, most popular programs are sold in Mac and Windows flavors—and the documents they create are freely interchangeable. These include Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint; FileMaker Pro; Macromedia FreeHand and Dreamweaver; Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop; and many more.

The bad news is that you'll probably have to buy the Mac versions of those programs. And keep in mind that you'll sometimes find significant differences between the two versions of the same

program. There are noticeable discrepancies between the Mac and Windows versions of Microsoft Office, for example. (Office 2004 for Mac lacks the workgroup features found in the Windows version but has Mac-only goodies such as Office's Project Center.) So before you spend money on replacing your main applications, make sure that the Mac version supports the features you use most often.

If the specific program you use doesn't have a Mac version, don't worry. There's probably a Mac alternative—maybe even two or three—that can give you the features you need (see "Finding the Right Software").

Moving Your Files

Once you've outfitted your Mac, you'll want to move your files from the Windows machine over to it. You can do this in several ways. If you have a CD or DVD burner or an external hard drive, there's not much to it: Copy your PC documents to this device. Insert the disc into your Mac or connect the external drive to it, and then copy the files over. If your PC doesn't have a CD or DVD burner and you don't have an external drive, you can connect your PC to your Mac with a network cable to copy files (see "A Network for Two" for detailed instructions).

After you've transferred your Windows files to your new Mac, you'll need to put them in the right places (your old Palm Desktop files in the Mac's Palm folder, digital photos in the Pictures folder, and so on). Detto's Move2Mac kit (\$50; www.detto.com/move2mac) will do much of this work for you. Another great resource is Apple's Switch page (www.apple.com/switch/howto), which offers answers to a host of common questions.

The majority of your files should make the move without trouble. Macs can read most standard exchange formats. These include graphics formats such as JPEG, GIF, TIFF, and PNG; Rich Text Format (RTF) and plain text; HTML; MIDI and MP3; TrueType and OpenType fonts; and so on.

However, not everything will go quietly. For example, because there's no Mac version of Microsoft Access, bringing your databases over will take some work. You'll have to export the data and then import it into a cross-platform database program such as FileMaker Pro. Unfortunately, you'll lose your layouts in the process; if you can't live without them, you may want to buy Microsoft's Windows simulator, Virtual PC

(\$129; www.macbu.com) and use it to run Access on your Mac.

Navigating a Strange New World

Mac OS and Windows grow more alike with each new version. For example, the latest versions of both offer a built-in firewall, the ability to share a single cable modem or DSL among the computers on a network, and fast account switching (all of your open programs stay open when another account holder ducks in to do a little work). Despite these similarities, the two operating systems are still extremely different in both operation and philosophy. (For help finding your way around, see “Where’d It Go?”)

Getting Acquainted There’s no Start menu in OS X. Instead, you can stash the icons of frequently used programs, documents, and folders in any of several handy parking areas. For example, you can use the Dock at the bottom edge of the screen (that is, the Dock is *usually* at the bottom edge; you can move it to either side of the screen via the Apple menu’s Dock submenu). You can also drag icons into or out of the Places sidebar on the left side of any Finder window.

OS X doesn’t have a task bar, either. Instead, a small black triangle appears beneath the Dock

icons of open programs. If you click and hold on one of these icons (or control-click on it), you’ll see a pop-up list of the open windows in that program, just as you would in Windows XP (see “Dock Tricks”).

One convention that’s the same on both platforms is quick application switching. In Windows, you press control-tab to cycle through open programs. On the Mac, you cycle through open programs by holding down the ⌘ key and pressing tab. In fact, in OS X 10.3, pressing ⌘-tab works more like control-tab in Windows than ever, displaying a large, floating palette with icons for each of your open programs. Release the keys when you’ve highlighted the one you want to go to, and the palette will disappear.

Speaking of which, here’s an OS X bonus feature: You can press ⌘-tilde (~) to cycle through every open window in a *single* program.

Finding Your Stuff Working with disks is also very different on the Mac. For example, every internal or external disk is represented by an icon both on the desktop and in the Finder window. OS X does have something like the My Computer window—the Computer window (Go: Computer), which may make you more comfortable. Both the desktop icons and those in the

Tip

You won’t have any trouble moving files from the Windows version of iTunes to the Mac version. But you may run into trouble if you’ve purchased songs from a different online music store such as Wal-Mart or Music-match. To import these DRM-protected files, you’ll need to burn them to an audio CD on the PC and then re-rip them into iTunes on the Mac.—CHRISTOPHER BREEN

Finding the Right Software

In some cases, you may not be able to find an exact equivalent of your Windows software. But with a little detective work, you can almost always find something similar.

To get you started in your hunt, here is a sampling of Mac alternatives to several of the most common Windows programs. However, this is by no means an exhaustive list.

If you’re having trouble finding an appropriate replacement, check out Apple’s Mac OS X Downloads page (macworld.com/0336), which offers a list of Mac software broken down by category. For a more comprehensive inventory, go to VersionTracker (www.versiontracker.com), which monitors the latest software releases and updates, and provides user reviews.—KELLY LUNSFORD

If You Use This		Check Out This		
CATEGORY	PROGRAM	PROGRAM	PRICE	CONTACT
E-mail	Microsoft Outlook Express 6	Apple Mail	free ^a	www.apple.com
	Microsoft Outlook 2003	Microsoft Entourage 2004	\$399, with full Office 2004 suite	www.macbu.com
Internet	Microsoft Internet Explorer	Apple’s Safari	free ^a	www.apple.com
		Mozilla Firefox	free	www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/
	FeedDemon, NewzCrawler, or Pluck	Ranchero’s NetNewsWire Lite or NetNewsWire	free, \$25	www.ranchero.com
		Shrook 2.12	\$25	www.fondantfancies.com
		Freshly Squeezed Software’s PulpFiction 1.1	\$25	www.freshlysqueezedsoftware.com
Digital Photography	Picasa or Adobe Photoshop Album 2	Apple’s iPhoto 5	\$79, with full iLife ‘05 suite ^a	www.apple.com
		iView Media 2	\$50	www.iview-multimedia.com
	Adobe Photoshop Elements 3 for Windows or Microsoft Digital Image Suite 10	Adobe Photoshop Elements 3 for Mac	\$90	www.adobe.com
Audio	Winamp	Apple’s iTunes 4.7	free	www.apple.com
	Windows Media Player 10	Windows Media Player 9 for Mac OS X	free	www.macbu.com
	RealPlayer	RealPlayer 10 for Mac OS X	free	www.real.com
Publishing	Microsoft Publisher 2003	Apple’s Pages	\$79, with full iWork ‘05 suite	www.apple.com
		Adobe InDesign CS	\$699	www.adobe.com
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		AppleWorks 6.2	\$79	www.apple.com
		Apple’s iWork ‘05	\$79	www.apple.com
		ThinkFree Office	\$50	www.thinkfree.com

^aIncluded with OS X 10.3. ^bIncluded with the Mac mini.

A Network for Two

If you're moving to the Mac mini but keeping your PC, or if you just want to transfer files directly between systems, you can connect your Mac and PC via a network. The Mac mini has an Ethernet port, and most PCs do, too. If you don't already have a full-blown network (that is, two or more computers connected by cables to an Ethernet hub), you can always buy an Ethernet crossover cable for about \$10 and connect it directly between the two computers' Ethernet jacks.



To access files over your new network, put all the PC files you want to share into, say, the My Documents folder, and then share that folder over the network. On the Mac, open a Finder window and click on the Network icon in the Places sidebar, double-click on MSHOME (or whatever your PC's workgroup name is), and then double-click on your PC's icon. Type in your name and password (if necessary), click on OK, open the folder that represents your PC, and finally open the shared folder you want—in this example, My Documents.

The contents of the shared Windows folder appear in OS X's Finder window. From here, it's a simple matter of dragging files from one machine's icon to another.

In fact, you can go the other way, too. You can sit at your PC and view the contents of your Mac's Home folder. To prepare the Mac for visitation from a PC, open the Sharing pane in System Preferences, turn on Windows Sharing, and then choose View: Accounts. Your Mac is ready for invasion.

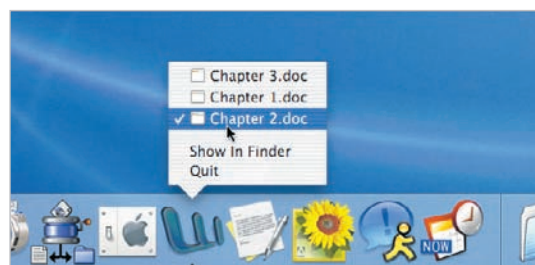
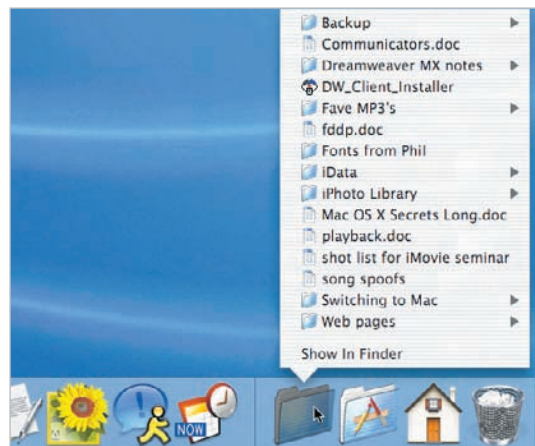
On the Windows machine, open My Network Places or Network Neighborhood. Your Mac's icon should appear here, bearing a label like *Samba 2.2.3a (Robins-computer)*. (Samba is the Unix version of the SMB file-sharing protocol that Windows uses.) Double-click on the icon, sign in, and marvel at the instant appearance of your actual Home folder—on the PC. You can open your files on either system, copy them back and forth, or do what you will with them.

If your Mac doesn't show up in the My Network Places or Network Neighborhood window, try restarting the PC. The My Network Places window updates only once per session. If that doesn't work, click on the View Workgroup Computers link in the left task pane; in the next window, click on the Microsoft Windows Network link. Finally, double-click on the Workgroup icons until you find your Mac.

Computer window reflect only the disks currently connected to your Mac. You'll never see an icon for an empty drive, as you do in Windows.

Bailing Out Windows isn't the only operating system with a "three-fingered salute." When you need to bail out of a frozen program on the Mac, press ⌘-option-escape, and a Force Quit dialog box appears. Click on the program you want to shut down, click on Force Quit, confirm your choice, and then relaunch the program.

Stashing Your Trash You'll find the OS X Trash icon at the end of the Dock. In general, it works exactly like the Windows Recycle Bin—not surpris-



Dock Tricks If you control-click on a folder or disk icon on the Dock (top), you get a pop-up menu of everything inside of that disk or folder. If you control-click on an application icon (bottom), you can jump to any open window in that program or quit it altogether.

ing, since the Mac's Trash Can was Microsoft's inspiration. However, there are a couple of differences.

The Trash doesn't empty automatically, no matter how full your hard drive gets. That job is yours. The simplest way to do this is to control-click on the Trash icon and then choose Empty Trash from the contextual menu.

If you're concerned about security, you'll appreciate Panther's Secure Empty Trash feature, which you can access through the Finder menu. When you use it, you don't just make the icons in the Trash disappear, as you do when you use the normal Empty Trash command. Instead, you tell OS X to overwrite the file's data on the hard drive with digital gibberish. Nobody—not the person who buys your used Mac on eBay, not the CIA—will ever be able to recover the scrubbed data.

Changing Settings The Control Panel is alive and well in OS X, but it's called System Preferences, and it shows up on the Dock as a light-switch icon. Just like the Windows Control Panel, System Preferences contains icons for adjusting your computer's clock, network connections, and power settings. You can view these icons by category or in a simple alphabetical list—just choose either View: Show All In Categories or View: Show All Alphabetically (see "Whatever Your Preference").

As for the Registry, IRQs, DLLs, and Blue Screens of Death—forget it. They simply don't exist on the Mac.

Size matters not Maximize your mini



Dr. Bott

MoniSwitch USB

Share a keyboard, mouse, and display between up to four USB computers. Perfect for adding the Mac mini to your desktop without losing desktop space. Fully compatible with all USB PCs and Macs.



matias
corporation

Mac OS X Keyboard

More control, literally. Work smarter with special symbols printed on the keycaps, two USB ports built in, Eject and Volume keys, and an extra Control key for easy access to contextual menus.



DVIator

Connect an ADC Apple Cinema Display to your Mac mini and DVI PC and enjoy all the screen real estate and classic Apple elegance.



BT Micro

Comfort, performance, and quality in a stylish and affordable 2-button, bluetooth mouse with scroll wheel. Built-in charger and power switch.



DVI Extension Cable

Put another 10 feet between your Mac mini and your DVI flat panel display with no loss in video signal quality. Full DVI compatibility.



Creature II Speakers

"We've tested virtually all of the iPod-centric speaker systems to date, and none compares in sound quality for the dollar to Creature IIs." - iPodLounge.com



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Working with Programs

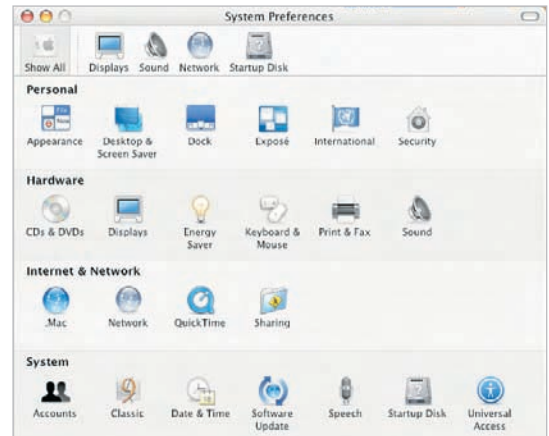
In general, programs work on the Mac just as they do in Windows—double-click on one to open it, choose Quit from the program's menu to exit it, and so on—but there are a few important differences.

Today's Menu Once you're in a program and hard at work, you'll discover that the Mac has only one ever-present menu bar. The menus change depending on the program and the window being used. So you won't find the menu bar inside *each window* you open; it will always be at the top of the screen. One side effect of this is that closing

Where'd It Go?

If you're switching to OS X from Windows, you may feel as though you've entered a foreign land. This alphabetical listing will help you track down some common Windows functions in OS X. The actual functions are pretty much the same—they're just in different places.

Windows	Mac OS X Equivalent
Add Hardware control panel	The Mac doesn't require a program to install the driver for a new external gadget. The drivers for most printers, mice, and other accessories come preinstalled. If you plug in a device and it doesn't work, install the correct driver from the included CD (or the manufacturer's Web site).
Add Or Remove Programs	Here's another one you just don't need on the Mac. To remove a program, you usually just drag its icon to the Trash.
BIOS	You'll never have to update or even think about your Mac's ROM (the approximate equivalent of the PC's BIOS). It's permanent and unchanging. Your Mac's similar <i>firmware</i> does occasionally require updating, to work with a new OS version—about once every four years.
Control Panel	There is a Control Panel in OS X, but it's called System Preferences and is represented on the Dock by a light-switch icon.
Directories	Most people call these "folders" on the Mac.
Disks	Every disk inside or attached to a Mac is represented on the screen by an icon. You'll never see an icon for an empty drive, as you do in Windows. And there are no drive letters; the Mac refers to disks, not drives, and each disk has a name, not a letter.
Maximize button	On the Mac, the closest thing to the Maximize button is the zoom button (the green button in the upper left corner of a window). Instead of expanding a window to fit the entire screen, however, it makes the window grow or shrink just enough to enclose its contents.
Minimize button	You can minimize an OS X window to the Dock just the way you would minimize a Windows window to the task bar. Use any of these methods: double-click on its title bar, press ⌘-M, choose Window: Minimize Window, or click on the yellow minimize button at the top left of a window. Restore the window by clicking on its Dock icon.
Properties dialog box	You can call up a very similar dialog box for any item (file, folder, program, disk, or printer) by selecting its icon and then choosing File: Get Info.
Registry	There is no Registry on the Mac. Let the celebration begin!



Whatever Your Preference The System Preferences panel is a one-stop shop for most of your systemwide settings, including the clock, network connections, and power settings.

all of a program's windows doesn't close the program itself. You must choose File: Quit (⌘-Q) or click and hold on the program's Dock icon and choose Quit from the pop-up menu.

Where the Apps Are When it comes to managing your programs, you'll find that the Mac's Applications folder is similar to the Program Files folder in Windows (choose Go: Applications, or just press ⌘-shift-A). The difference is that in OS X you're *encouraged* to open this folder and double-click on things. You'll never have to guess which icon represents the application you seek. On the Mac, all applications have plain-English names. Microsoft Word, for example, appears as Microsoft Word, not as the baffling WINWORD.EXE.

Remember, there's no Start menu—in a way, the Applications folder is it: in it is a complete list of programs, not the greatest hits that appear on your Dock.

Uninstalling Made Simple You don't usually need a special Remove Programs application to uninstall a program on the Mac. Just open your Applications folder and drag the relevant program icon to the Trash. That's it—no need to worry that you're leaving some destabilizing fragments behind.

The Last Word

Switching to the Mac isn't effortless, and OS X isn't perfect. Still, over time, you'll discover hundreds of grace notes—little examples of fit and finish that make you appreciate the perfectionists who work at Apple. And in Panther, more than ever, you'll revel in the solidity and security of OS X—a breath of fresh air at a time when Windows viruses and Microsoft patches descend on PCs like locusts.

Yes, the smoothness, elegance, and beauty of the Mac may come as something of a shock to your sensibilities—but you'll get used to it.

Contributing Editor DAVID POGUE (www.davidpogue.com) wrote *Switching to the Mac: The Missing Manual, Panther Edition* (Pogue Press/O'Reilly, 2004).